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From cybercrime to cyborg crime

van der Wagen, Wytske

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From Cybercrime to Cyborg crime

An exploration of high-tech cybercrime, offenders and victims
through the lens of Actor-Network Theory

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An exploration of high-tech cybercrime, offenders and victims
through the lens of Actor-Network Theory

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Promotores

Prof. dr. R. Van Swaeningen

Prof. mr. dr. B.F. Keulen

Copromotor

Dr. M. Althoff

Beoordelingscommissie

Prof. dr. G.P. Mifsud Bonnici

Prof. dr. R.J.H.M. Staring

Prof. dr. B. van den Berg

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“It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end” (Ursula K. Le Guin)

This dissertation is an exploration of high-tech cybercrime from an actor-network theory lens. When I started this research project some years ago, cybercrime was still a rather underexplored topic in criminology. This has changed rapidly within the last few years. Cybercrime has become an important research topic on the criminological agenda, both nationally and internationally, and this will probably remain so in the future. With my dissertation¹ I hope to make a valuable contribution to the criminological understanding of high-tech cybercrime and to stimulate further theoretical debates on the role of technology in crime.

This PhD research, like any other one I suppose, was definitely a journey, a metaphor that I also use in this dissertation. Throughout this research I found some new interesting paths and directions, but I also encountered some obstacles and delays on the road. One thing is for sure: engaging yourself with actor-network theory can be both a blessing and a curse. Apart from an intellectual challenge, a PhD project is a mental and even physical contest. The last few miles are, of course, always the

¹ This PhD research was funded by the University of Groningen, Faculty of Law.

toughest. I am therefore very delighted that this journey has come to an end. Of course, it should be underscored that this was definitely not a solo-journey. To speak in 'Latourian terms' already, various other actors were involved in enabling, shaping and accomplishing this PhD project. For now, I would like to mainly stick to the 'human' ones.

First of all, I would like to thank my promotores René van Swaaningen and Berend Keulen for their guidance, inspiration and patience throughout the years. I am particularly grateful for the fact that René, who actually got involved in a later stage of this PhD, gave the research project a new and positive boost. His enthusiasm and persistence encouraged me to successfully complete this PhD project and gave me the confidence to really 'carry on' and 'bring it on'. The exact same thing could be said for my co-promotor and daily supervisor Martina Althoff, on who I could always count. Apart from her enthusiasm, dedication and insightfulness, she gave me a lot of useful advice and guidance concerning how to manage and organize a PhD project. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Wolter Pieters, who was co-author of two articles in this dissertation. It was a great pleasure for me to cooperate with him and his critical input I highly appreciate. I also would like to thank the members of the assessment committee for their time, assessment and constructive feedback. The final product, this dissertation, could not become 'a fact' without their effort and judgment.

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Table of content

Chapter 1	11
Introduction: Cybercrime, the novelty debate and the frontiers of criminological theory*	11
1.1. Introduction	12
1.2. Cybercrime: terminology, definition and classification	15
1.3. (A)typical features of cybercrime: a brief literature overview	18
1.4. Criminology and the novelty debate	27
1.5. Adding another layer to the conversation – the theoretical context	29
1.6. Research aim, central questions and relevance of the dissertation	37
1.7. Actor-network theory as a central approach	42
1.8. Research strategy: a case study approach	55
1.9. Reading guide	71
Chapter 2	77
From Cybercrime to Cyborg crime: botnets as hybrid criminal actor-networks*	77
2.1. Introduction	79
2.2. Botnets: some basic features	83
2.3. Towards a criminological conceptualization of botnets	85
2.4. Actor-network theory in a nutshell	87
2.5. Non-humans as actors: the concept of technical mediation	89
2.6. Case study method	94
2.7. Short description of the case	95
2.8. Case analysis	96
2.9. Discussion	109
Chapter 3	113
The other ‘others’: an explorative study of the processes of labelling of, by and among hackers*	113
3.1. Introduction	115
3.2. Hackers: from ‘hero’ to ‘criminal’	119
3.3. Labeling, self-image and a spoiled identity	120
3.4. Research method	123
3.5. How hackers think they are perceived by the outside world	128
3.6. How hackers see themselves as ‘the other’	130
3.7. How hackers see themselves in relation to ‘the others’	133
3.8. Discussion	138
Chapter 4	141

The Cyborgian Deviant: An Assessment of the Hacker through Actor- Network Theory*	141
4.1. Introduction	143
4.2. Hackers and technology: two inseparable worlds	146
4.3. The cyborg-perspective of Actor-Network Theory	151
4.4. Research method	155
4.5. Research findings: what it means to be a hacker.....	159
4.6. Concluding remarks.....	174
Chapter 5	179
The Hybrid Victim: Re-conceptualizing High-Tech Cyber Victimization Through Actor-Network Theory*	179
5.1. Introduction	181
5.2. The current theorization of the high-tech cyber victim.....	184
5.3. Setting the empirical context: the victim of ransomware, botnets and virtual theft	187
5.4. Limitations of existing frameworks in analyzing high-tech crime	193
5.5. The lens of actor-Network theory.....	199
5.6. Conceptualizing high-tech cyber victimization through ANT	204
5.8. Conclusion and discussion: towards a hybrid victim theory.....	208
Chapter 6	213
General conclusion and discussion*	213
6.1. Introduction: the departure of the journey	214
6.2. Key findings from the case studies	216
6.3. Arrival: The ANT-based cyborg crime perspective.....	226
6.4. Critical reflection on the results	232
6.5. Taking a closer look at the agency of 'things'	233
6.6. Possible legal and practical implications	237
6.7. Opportunities and possible pitfalls of travelling with ANT.....	241
6.8. The journey continues: future research directions	246
References	249
Nederlandse samenvatting (Dutch Summary)	278
Curriculum Vitae	294
Publications	295